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235: 67

Sunderland 9th March 1781

Sir

Enclosed I transmit your Excellency two letters I recd under the signature thereunto annexed that they may be laid before Congress. I shall make no comments on them, but submit their disposal of them to their consideration. They are the identical and only letters I ever received from him. and to which I never returned any manner of answer, nor have I ever had the least personal acquaintance with him directly or indirectly. The letter of the 2d of Feby 1781. I received a few days ago, with a duplicate of the other which I received the latter part of July last past in the high road in Arlington, which I laid before Govenor Chittenden, and a number of other principal gentlemen of the State (within ten minuites after I received it for advice

The result after mature deliberation, and considering the extreem circumstances of the State, was to take no further notice of the matter; the reason for such a procedure are very obvious to this State, when they consider that Congress have previously claimed an exclusive right of arbitrating on the existence of Vermont as a seperate Government from New York, New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay at the same time claiming this territory either in whole or in part; and exerting their influence to make schisms among her citizens, thereby in considerable degree weakning this Government, and exposing its Inhabitants to the incursions of the British Troops and their Savage allies from the province of Quebec

It seemes that those Governments regardless of Vermont contiguous situation to Canada do not consider that their Northern

frontiers have been seemed to her, nor of the merit of this State in a long and hazzerdous War, but have flattered themselves with the expectation that this State could not fail (with their help) to be desolated by a foreign Enemy, and that their exhorbitant claims, and avericious designs may at some future ~~time~~ take place on this district of country

Notwithstanding those complicated embarrassments and I might add discouragements, Vermont during the last campaign, defended her frontiers, and at the close of it opened a truce with General Haldiman (who commands the British Troops in Canada) which continued near four weeks in the same situation, during which time Vermont secured the northern frontiers of the State of New York, in consequence of my including them in the truce, altho that Government could have but little claim to my protection

I am confident that Congress will not dispute my sincere attachment to the cause of my Country, when I do not hesitate to say I am fully grounded in opinion that Vermont has an indubitable right to agree on terms of a cessation of hostilities with Great Britain. Provided the United States persist in negociating her application for a union between them, for Vermont of all people would be the most miserable were she obliged to defend the independence of the United Claiming States, and they at the same time at full liberty to overturn and ruin the independence of Vermont

I am persuaded when Congress considers the circumstances of this State they will be more surprized that I have

transmitted them the inclosed letters than that I have kept them in custody so long, for I am as resolutely determined to defend the independence of Vermont, as Congress are that of the United States. and rather than fail, will retire with [the] hardy Green Mountain Boys into the desolate caverns of the mountains, and wage War with human nature at large

I am with respect and Esteem
Your Excellencys most Obt Servt
Ethan Allen

His Excellency
Samuel Huntington Esqr
Prest Congress

Isle aux noix May 8th 1781

Sir

I herewith exhibit sundry Papers by which your Excellency will see the peculiar situation of the State of Vermont — A copy of my instructions for setting a cartel together with some other papers I have delivered Maj. Lundas which I expect he will transmit to you have seek your instructions to Maj. Dundas and Capt. Sherwood and find some imbarisments by there not being both on one footing when you consider the natural Evils attenging Learge & Popular Bodies you will not be surprised that my Instructions are in the form they at present ar I have freely conversed with Capt. Sherwood and hope this proceeder will make way for some further and would propose whether in the interim it would not be to the mutual benefit of the contending Powers to keep there troops within there respective lines The Legislature of Vermont stands adjourned to about the middle of June next when it is expected that the people East of Hudsons river and West of our former lines will be represented in the Legislature of said State when another flag will be sent with ample power to exchange Prisoners provided a Cartel is now sent to transact ~~business~~ such other business as may be then judged proper —

I am with due respect your Excellency's most obt. humb. serv.

Ira Allen

His Excellency
Gen. Haldimand

Isle-aux-noix May 11th 1781

Sir

I have the honour to transmit to you for his Excellencys information the following Reasons and sentiments of Col. Allen, as he has exhibited them to me (viz) The circular Letters to the Neighbouring States (enclosed by Maj. Dundas) were designed by the Cabinet of Vermont as a Political stroke to keep the neighbouring from commencing Hostilities on them when they declared Neutrality as also to imbarass Congress in that respect and as the claiming States had done every thing in there Power to make discord in Vermont and had in some measure succeeded as there had been a large body of Men in the Easterly part of the State in favour of New York (a Government of which were secretly in favour of British Government) another Considerable Body of men living contiguous to Connecticutt river for sinister views had ever appeared the rivers being the Boundary line between the respective states of N. Hampshire & Vermont and after Vermont relinquished her jurisdiction to sixteen towns east of said River the People on the two sides of the said River refused to subject themselves to either Governments except in some things respecting the War They petitioned the Gen. Court of N. Hampshire to extend jurisdiction over them & the whole of Vermont which was in agitation in Congress but the three claiming States could not agree and Congress not making a division at the time sent in sept last on which the Petition of N. Hampshire thought by raising a convention from all the disaffected of the four States contiguous to Connecticutt River and by that means get them connected with N. Ham-
-shire

When the cabinet of Vermont thought that consider-
-ing all the clandestine and unjustifiable proceedings
of N. Hampshire they were ripe for giving N. Y. &c.— a heavy
Blow. an agent was sent to sd. convention a committee was
appointed to treat with the Legislature of Vermont
the convention adjourned to the same day said
Legislature were to convene & the Legislature when
convened laid a jurisdictional claim east to the mason
line (being about twenty miles east of the Connecticutt
River) & west to Hudsons River articles of union were then
agreed on Between the Legislature and Convention and sent
out for the approbation of the People which was almost
unanimous the Legislature adjourned for a short space
and conveaned again when the Eastern District were
fully Represented & proseeded to Buisness with great har-
-mony

A large number of petitions was sent from
the People inhabiting sd Western claim requesting an
extention of jurisdiction and when a committee was appointed
to attend a convention to be held at cambridge in instant
May with full power on articles of union the Legislature
adjourned to about the middle of June and next to be con-
-vened Bennington when it is expected the Western District
will be fully Represented as the People there have been
some years wishing for a union with Vermont but have
been put off as the Cabinet of Vermont waited a more favour-
-able opertunity when they could justify their conduct
to the World by the ill treatment of N. York & within this
western claim are a respectable number in favour of British
Government — The reason of Col. Beo. Robinson Letters &

that of Gen. Allen's being sent to Congress are some accounts had arrived from Long-Island purporting that General Allen had received such Letters they were first Promulgated amongst those in favour of Government from that to some other it ~~was however necessary~~ and Mr. Robinson's second Letter had not arrived which was mentioned in his ~~Second~~. It was however Necessary that some immediate Step should be Taken to Pacify those of the Populas that had Taken an Early and active part in this War for many of them thought that after the Declaration of Independence congress was kept to God Almighty Both in Power and perfection and it has been with great difficultty that ided is so far erased and is at present in such a decline and as the seam must be opened to this Bothheaded Multitued before Neutrality could be declared it was Judged that the best way of Promulgation was to send the identical Letter to Congress with a proper Letter from Gen. Allen that it should go in a male from Hartford and that the copies should be read in the Legislature at their next session after said Letters ware Read and Excellency the Governor and sundry Members of the Legislature had advanced arguments Purporting the right of Vermont to hold correspondance with any Power or to offer or except terms of cesation of Hostilities with any Powers the Injustice of the claiming States & Congress the unreasonableness of Vermonts supposing herself under obligation to fight to support the Independance of the United States and they left at full Liberty to reserve the Rights of Vermont that by the conduct of Congress and the Claiming States

it appeared that they were willing Vermont should defend there respective frontiers so far as they could and if Vermont should by the war be ever so much depopulated it would still be to their advantage as their intentions appeared to be to divide said State as the end of the War &c— The question being put whether the Proceedings had on said Robinsons Letters and that of Gen. Allen was approbated by the House when it passed in the affirmative— There is every reason to suppose that those prosedings will have their desired effect but it must be a work of time Popular Bodies move slow—— The people of Vermont are ripening for neutrality as fast as the wheel of time can role— Some Politicians are of opinion it may be accomplished before the rising of the Sept session of assembly but in such case it will be expected that Commissioners authorized on the part of Vermont will negotiate such business with Commissioners in some way duly authorized from the Court of Great Britain to approbate Vermont to be a Neutral State to the end of the War—— for Vermont at present to consent to be a British Province would be little more than changing the Table of and make Vermont the seat of War

The Citizens of Vermont were of opinion that the demands of Great Britain upon her Colonists were unconstitutional and unreasonable which induced them to take an active part in the War nor have they yet altered their opinions in that respect be the treatment they

I have met with from Congress and the claiming States considering the active part they have taken in this War has raised a greater resentment in the Minds of the more Contemplative against Congress & the Claiming States than they have against Great Britain and considering the extent of their territory and Numbers of Inhabitants are fully sencible that they cannot continue a seperate Power but that in time they must connect with some more aged and powerfull and when they consider their contiguous situation to that of the New-England States the Ties of Consanguinity &c the debts contracted by the United States and Vermont are clear of debt and wish so to Remain upon a full consideration of the Peculiar situation of Vermont the Leading Men there are doing every thing in their power to bring about Nutrality but as has been before observed that in order to settle some broils in the State it was necessary to close said Unions which in some respects tends to postpone a completion of Nutrality yet when once affected it will be the more powerfull and pirminant — Whether Congress or the Claiming States would use Corrosive measures with Vermont or not on such a Declaration is at present uncertain however Should they attempt should choose to try them one Battle before we called for any assistance —

Should any considerable force be sent to invade the fronteers of N. York before Nutrality can be settled, Would propose a point to be made towards the fronteers of Vermont which would enable the officers of Vermont that are Principal command to detain their other officers and Men that are so exceeding Great Mr. Col. Allen's Reasons for desiring

a Cartel are to shew to the People of Vermont that the British Gen. will consider Vermont a State unconnected with the United: and thereby enable them to collect a sufficient Numbers of Prisoners that were taken with Gen. Burgoyne and else where that are now scattered in the Country to Exchange for those in Canada and to continue an intercourse by Flag. The Prisoners taken at Fort Ann and Skeensborough will at a future period when Vermont exercise jurisdiction there come under consideration"

Copy of reasons we exhibited to Gen. Haldimand by Capt Sherwood"

Major Skinner &c

235:73

Quebec 14th May 1781

Sir

I have Received your Letter of the 8th Instant, and the Papers therein refered to have been transmitted to me by Maj. Dundas having perused them they are Returned to the commissioners in Treaty with You together with instruction for the Rule of their Conduct

I am
Sir
Your most obedient and
most humble Servant
Fred. Haldimand

Col. Ira Allen

235:74

Bennington 15th May 1781

Sir

A flag which I sent last fall to the British Commanding officer at Crown Point and which was there detained neer one month, on their return gave me to understand that they at several different times threatened to captivate your own person, said it had been in their power to take some of your family the last campaign, but that they had an eye on yourself

I must confess that such conversation before my flag seem rather flimmery than real premeditated design. However that was such conversation I do not dispute which you will make such improvement as you see fit

I shall conclude with assureing your honour, that notwithstanding the late reports or rather surmises of my correspondence with the Enemy to the prejudice of the United States it is wholly without foundation. I am Sir with due respect your honors

Most Obt Servt

Ethan Allen

To General Schuyler

The World at Large &c &c &c
Honor Pledged for fulfillment of &c
no authority for ——— N ——— Const
agree ——— any ——— the ——— &c
Constitution Liberty or ——— Enmity
with G. &c ——— no desire to engage them any
enterprise that is not Equally beneficent to both P—
do recommend speedy Declaration &c ———
Punctual Secrecy has been on the part of Gen. ——
Reports of reunion &c have been propagated —— may
render by emissaries from C —— to the Cl —— s.
good intention ineffectual &c ———
Necessity of Letters &c do not choose mine Exposed &c
Honour pledged &c ——— mistakes may lead some in
s. of N. M. to fatal measures on acct. of reports)
Cekation of cl ——, & ——— Public declaration &c ,,,
——— Create Jealousies and none to be s. ———
before or after Af — My ——— Defition &c
Sign S. Rock &c —— Confidential P.
Credit may be given ——— if Leading Men
are sincear &c no objections made &c ———

Sir

Quebec May 21st 1781

Agreeable to your Desire I have communicated to his Excellency Gen. Haldimand the substance of your conversation with him upon the subject of a R— to Contry and I am commanded to signify to you His Excellency sentiments thereon.

With respect to the permanent Cartel wished for by V—— as proposed by them the Gen. has ordered a determined and his reasons for not complying therewith have been communicated to Col. Allen She is nevertheless desirous to accomplish the reunion already proposed to the people of Vermont but fears that delay will prove fatal to his wishes in their favour the terms for reconciliation which his Excellency held out to them are undoubtedly sufficient to secure to them there Liberties and Properties and he desires you would communicate to Col. Allen His ardent wishes that the People of Vermont loose no time in acceding to conditions so consonant to their well being There is from the last accounts from Europe great reasons to think that a General Negotiation for peace has commenced under the Mediation of the Emperor — Sir Joseph York and Sir Keith are the Plenipotentiaries on the part of Great Britain and are gone to Vermont on that Business — Whatever the terms of peace may be the People of Vermont must be left in the same unfavourable situation they were in before the present troubles except that by a speedy determination to resist the tyranny of Congress & to accept the Terms I have offered them they secure to themselves a seperate Government and jurisdiction indipendant of the other

State of Vermont June 1781

Whereas Col. Ira Allen has been with a flagg to the Province of Quebec for the purpose of setting a cartel or exchange of Prisoners and has used his best policy by feigning or endeavoring to make them believe that the State of Vermont had a desire to negotiate a treaty of peace with Britain thereby to Prevent there immediate invasions or incursions upon the frontiers of this State as appears by the Letter he sent to Gen. Haldemand dated may the 8th 1781 inclosing a copy of Col. Beverly Robinsons Letter to Gen. Allen and General Allens Letter to Congress as also a Letter to Col. Allen sent to Congress and the resolutions of the assembly of Vermont approbating the same as also the circular Letter to the several States delivered to Dundas according to his verbal Report made to us this day we are of the opinion that the critical Circumstances this State is in being out of union with the United States and thereby unable to make that vigorous Difence we could wish for—think it to be a necessary Political manoevre to save the frontiers of this State——

Thom. Chittenden
Mosis Robinson
Sam. Bronson
John Fassett
Jonas Fay
Sam.l Safford
Sam.l Robenson
Joseph Fay

States—— His Excellency has no wish to deceive or any need in proposing to reclaim this State but that of restoring the happy Government they once enjoyed and by it's influ-ence to redress the greevances imposed on them by their Nei-ghbouring States—— His Excellency therefore expects that the result of their deliberation in the Meeting to be held in June will be immediately communicated to him with sincerity and candour— In the Mean time it is to be considered (and it will be peeblickly declared) that there is not any Negotiation of treaty subsisting between His Excellency Gen. Haldemand and the State of Vermont—

I am Sir

Your most obedient and
Most Humble Servant

R. Mathews

Capt. Sherwood

(Copy)

State of Vermont — July 1781

Whereas this State is not in union with the United States altho often requested &c ...

This the British powers are acquainted with and are indeavouring to take the advantage of the disputes thereby to court a connection with this State on the principle of establishing it a British Province — from various accounts we are well assured that the British have a force in Canada larger than this State can at Present raise and support in the field and this State having no assurance of any assistance from any or either of the United States however hard the British forces may crowd on this State from the Province of Quebec by the advantage of the waters of Lake Champlain &c. altho several Expresses have been sent by the Gov. of this State to several of the respective Gov. of the United States with the most urgant requests to know whether any assistance would be afforded in such case and no official answer has been made by either of them

Wherefore we the subscribers do fully approbate Col. Ira. Allen ending a Letter dated Shenderland July 10th 1781 and directed to Gen. Haldimand and an other Letter to Capt. Justice Sherwood purporting an intention of this States becoming a British Province &c — this we consider as a Political proceeder to prevent the British forces invading this State and being a necessary step to preserve this State from ruin when we have too much reason to apprehend that this has been the wishes of some of our assuming Neighbours in the mean time to

strengthen the state against any insult until
this State shall receive better treatment from the
United States or obtain a seat in Congress

Thomas Chittenden
Jas Fay
John Fay
Saml. Robinson
Sim. Brownson
Joseph Fay

State of Vermont. Cumberland July 10th 1781

Sir

This State has become the topick of discourse throughout the United States various are the conjectures and prognostications of the Populas abroad I have authentic accounts from Congress that they spent several days last spring on the question of Vermont that it was the sense of Congress (after a lengthy debate) to make no determination respecting this campaign or to the end of the War — The Legislature of this State conveaned at Bennington in June last by Emmissaries from the other States or otherwise the verry great whigs in this State were much alarmed on account of Neitrality & when it was found on a political scrutiny that there were a Majority of that denomination in the Legislature who together with the influance of some others that attended crouded for an enquiry to shew from whence the reports of Neitrality orginated requesting that all Papers that had passed to and from the Province of Quebec might be laid before the House when the Governor Council and assembly resolved themselves into a Committee of the whole for the affor said enquiry and to determin on the expedeney of sending agents to Congress —— When it was called on for information I effected a willingness to give them every information in my power observing that on my arrival from the Isle aux-noix I exhibited my papers one to the Governor and those of the Council that were then present who approved well satisfied with my progeders that not Robbing that the assembly would wish to see the Papers I had left them at Home that I was willing to give them a verbal account

~~or go willingly to give them~~ or go and fetch the Papers as they might chose when the Committee adjourned I went and fetched the Papers When the Letters that had passed between Generals Haldamand and Chittenden Gen. Allen & Major Carlton Major Dundas and myself were read and I made a speech to the audience in such a manner as gave satisfaction to the Spies from the neighbouring States and the great Whigs in this State that there was no truce of Neutrality intended by this State yet that the British Government was willing to grant Vermont Charter Previledges for a Colony if they would accept them ——— Then it was agreed that three agents should be appointed to attend on Congress with full power to make and receive proposals for articals of union between the United States and Vermont and to take seats in Congress; When Joseph Fay Ira Allen and Bez a Woodward Esquires were elected (it is to be observed that they are not all on one footing) It is expected that said agents will make offers to Congress that will not be accepted by which means those in favour of Government will be able to evince to the People of this State (which is doubtless the intention that Congress means nothing more than to keep this State in suspence to the end of the War and then divide her Territory among the claiming States (which is doubtless the intention of many) This together with such other matters as may be safely intrusted will be in agitation before the next Election. These matters are ripening as fast as the nature of the case will permit

It is exceedingly difficult and somewhat dangerous attempting to change the Opinions of large

and popular bodies nor can any possible advantage arise by any of those in power to publish their sentiments in that respect untill the proper crices shall arrive for this is a popular Government and her Officers anually elected by the sufferages of the People Therefore carrying these matters in some measure under the Rose untill the next election when in all human probability a large majority of the then Officers of Government will be well disposed and then by the advantage of an other denial from Congress and having the rains of Government in their hands for one Year they will make a revolution so long wished for by many——

A very considerable part of the Citizens of this State are Emmigrants from Connecticutt and would choose Charter Priviledges similar to that Government and would expect to remain a reasonable time in a State of neitrality however hope that there will be no difficultty on them accounts

Gen. Allen has resigned and taken to his old studies Philosophy Gen. Bellows declined Serving Colonels Safford and Fletcher are elected in their Steads Gen. Enos commands this States troops in service these three Generals are acquainted with my Proceeders at the Isle-aux-noix &c,

The result of Whatever may take place at Congress shall transmit to you the agents are to set out on the first of August and will probably return the fore part of Sept. request that the signal agreed on by Capt. Sherwood and myself might be continued as that may be the best way of convenance——

I am with sentiments of esteem your Excellency
most obedient Hum. Servant

His Excellency Gen. Haldemand / Ira. Allen

(Copy)

235:81

Sunderland July 14th 1781

Dear Sir

Herewith you will receive Papers A Copy of a Man by Major Jay in whome You may place the highest confidence from his close attachment and faithfulness in endeavouring to bring about a Settlement an event which is so interesting and Consonant to our wishes nothing could more give me more pleasure than to have waited on you upon this Occasion had not the Legislature appointed me one of the Agents to Congress; much depends on the managements of affairs at that Place in assisting the revolution intended at the meeting of our Legislature in Sept. — You will be favoured with the perusal of my Letter to Gen Haldimand in which I have been more particular You will present my best compliments to the other Gentlemen Commissioners Mr. Sherwood &c

And believe to be

Dear Sir

Yours sincerely & devot.

Ira Allen

Captain J. Sherwood

Philadelphia Aug 18th 1781 235:82

To the Honorable Committee of Congress.

Whereas the State of Vermont hath formed jurisdictional Unions with People inhabiting a district of Land known only by the name of the new Hampshire Grants East of Connecticut River on apprehension that the said district does not of right belong to new Hampshire, also a district twenty miles on Lineal to Lying west of the new Hampshire Grants on apprehension that it does not of right belong to the State of New York: by means of which Unions, it is impracticable for the People on the new Hampshire Grants West of Connecticut River only to perform many public acts as a State, exclusive of the district above mentioned and that the Claims of the people on the said district to independence from the States of New Hampshire and New York respectively may have a full and fair hearing and that a final decision may be had thereon as soon as may be Therefore

The Subscribers delegates from and in behalf of the State of Vermont beg leave to propose the following as terms which upon to them necessary in order to a final Union between that and the United States. Viz. That Vermont be recognized as an independent State under the following description Viz beginning at the north Westerly corner of the State of Massachusetts, which is the northwest corner of the Town of Williamstown, and from thence extending eastwardly on the north line of Massachusetts to the

as it tends to the forty fifth degree of south Latitude
thence west in said latitude line to the center of the deepest
channel of Lake Champlain (West of Missisques Bay) thence
south Westwardly in the deepest channel of said Lake, or also
the channel of South and east Bay to the head of the latter,
thence up the deepest channel of Poultney river to the west
line of the town of Poultney. thence southwardly in the westwardly
line of the several towns of Poultney. Wells. Pawlet. Rupert
Longate. Sutherton. Shaftsbury. Bennington and Pownal
to the place of beginning

2nd That delegates to represent the State of Vermont in Congress
be elected by the representatives of the freemen of said state as it
is now entended until the several Claims of New Hampshire and
New York be heard and determined

3d That the several claims of New Hampshire and New York
be determined as soon as may be conveniently to the mode
prescribed by the articles of confederation for decision of
disputes between two or more States concerning boundary
jurisdiction &c

4th That Vermont have the same right as any other state. on
application to Congress to have a hearing on the said disputes.
and be admitted in like manner (by their Agents to be appointed
for that purpose) to support the claim of the
people neither said districts to independence from said states of
New Hampshire and New York respectively. and in case that on
trial the district aforesaid shall be found not of right to belong
To the State of New Hampshire and New York respectively
They shall be thence forth considered as belonging to the jurisdiction
of the State of Vermont

Philadelphia August 18th 1781.

Jonas Fay
Ira Allen
Bezaleel Woodward.

Loyal Block House 21st August 1781

Dear Sir

I have the honour to acknowledge your favour by Major Say with paper Essay on man for which I beg leave to return you my best thanks ——————

I find Major Say the Gentlemen you represented him to be and however different our political sentiments you may be assured that my former personal friendship for you and him remains unviolated. As I have requested the Major to present my compliments to Governor Chittenden and the Gentlemen of Vermont in General, have only to request you will remember me to my former good friend Gen. Allen with compliments and best respects to Mr. Allen and the young Ladys (the Gen.ls Daughters)

Believe me Dear Sir sincerely your
personal and most Humble Servant

Thomas Sherwood

Colonel Ira Allen

235:84

Arlington Sept. 2nd 1781

Gentlemen

I have consulted my Council on the subject of the present Negotiation relative to settlement of a Neutrality between His Excellency General Haldemand and this State — And as there is some matters of importance relative to the Overtures made by Congress to the State which is necessary to be communicated to General Haldimand for his information as also to acquaint him of the probability of bringing about a change of Government in October next and to concert proper measures to be pursued on both sides for that purpose —

Therefore you are hereby required and fully authorised to proceed to Skeensborough where you will meet Commissioners authorised from General Haldimand with whom you will treat on the above subject and return your Doings to me —

I am

Gentlemen

With sentiments of esteem

Your most ob.t humn. servt.

Thomas Chittenden

Col. Allen &
Maj. Jay

235:85

Mount Independance 12th Sept. 1781

Dear Sir

It is with pleasure we hear that you and Colonel Clark are at Skeensborough. We flatter ourselves with the hope that yourself and he will do us the honour to accompany Majr. Fay to this place where we shall be happy to entertain you with Camp fun and sincere friendship It is not political matters that inducetth us to request the favour of your company but merely to enjoy the sweets of personal friendship during the short interval of Hostilities which the present Cartel fairly admits

We have the Honour to be
with perfect esteem

Sir

your most humble servants
P. Sherwood
Geo. Smith

Col. Ira Allen

235:86

Private

Skeensborough Sept. 16th 1781

Gentlemen

We have to inform you that we are at this place waiting your arrival and are furnished with instructions from the Gov. in writing to negatiate buisness with you relative to a change of Governments and are possessed of every Power respecting the proceedings of Congress with the agents of Vermont & we have made every preparation for your reception that the situation of the place will admit and expect an agreeable interview with you as soon as may be as it will be of more consequence than can be expressed in this Paper

We are Gentlemen
With sentiments of esteem Your
Humble Servants
Ira Allen
Joseph Fay

To George Smith &
Justus Sherwood Esqrs,

The Commissioners on the part of Vermont propose for consideration (viz)

That in our opinion the first Proceedur of the new Legislature of Vermont will be to form into a committee of the whole to hear the report of their agents from Congress and then to take into consideration the proposals from Congress when we have every reason to expect them to be rejected when the Legislature will proceed to Buisness as the Members are from all parts of the State and many of them strangers to each other it will not be a miss for them to be a few days together before a Public Litigation of a change of Governments in order to that we would propose whether a Proclamation from his Excellency Gen. H. answer a valuable purpose as it would lay a foundation to contain the terms the Court of Great Britain have authorised his Excellency to give Vermont which we could wish (as the Citizens of Vermont and principally Emigrants from the N. England Governments their priviledges might be as near those they have been accostomed to as may be

That there should be no undue advantage taken by such Proclamation we propose that it be lodged with the Gen. Commissioners on the Lake that as soon as the Legislature have rejected the offers of Congress that a Confidential Person be forwarded to said Com. with that information when a flagg should be sent to Castleton with such Proclamation Sealed and directed to the Legislature when Gen. Enos will forward them unopened by express to the Legislature

Ira Allen
Joseph Fay

Skeensborough Sept. 20th 1781

235:88

Querys from Capt. Sherwood to the Commissioners of Vermont reporting their last proposals of a Proclamation &c

Query 1st do those proposals fully coincide with the opinions of the Gov and Council or such part of them as wish for a British Government

2d What effect (or particular advantage) will such a Proclamation in your Assembly

3d Will it not tend to enrage them and effectually put an end to every further negotiation

4th Will it not alarm Congress and gain for them a pretended compliance with all the demands of it

5th Shall you make the Proclamation publick or not

6th do you candidly believe it probable that the Assembly and populace in general will close with the Proclamation provided it gives them charter privaledges similar to those of Connecticutt or nearly the same

7th if the proclamation should be rejected will there be a probability or even a possibility of a reunion after such a

Skeensborough 20th Sept 1781

J. Sherwood Commissary

Answer to Capt. Sherwoods Queries relating to the proposed Proclamation

1st Answered in the affirmative

2d It will lay a foundation for the friends to

Government to enter fully on the business authoritatively
a close of the subject as it will contain the Gen.
Proposals
3d It cannot allarm the Legislature as to have the subject
proposed to them by the Gov. and Council, as Congress
and the world will be at a loss to judge what occasioned
such proclamation as all former private Negociations
on the subject will still remain in oblevion
4th The articals of consideration virtually precludes a compli-
ance nor can it alarm Congress or the other States more
than to have the matter litigated at large the assembly as
they are possesed of Lord George German Letter to Sir Henry
5th Clinton. It will be conveyed immediately on reception to
the Speaker and opened in presence of the Assembly
6th one New Election warrants the highest probability
7th Even should the proposals be rejected — still we are confident
it would not effect non who are now in favour of Government
but add to the numbers who would still pursue the grand
object

Ira Allen
Joseph Fay

Skeensborough 20th Sept. 1781

235:89

Lebec 30th Sept. 1781

Gentlemen

I do myself the pleasure to inform you that his Excellency Gen. Haldiman has been pleased to approve of our proceedings respecting political Matters of exchange &c — and likewise to consent to the parole of all Prisoners belonging to your State including the East & West Unions so that you may expect the fort Ann Prisoners and all others belonging to you (independant of the other States or any part of the continental army) as soon as they can be forwarded with conveniency

As Copt. Bronson left the Isle of Orleans to late to overtake the Flag that conducted the other he was detained at Sorels river but is now forwarded and I hope may arrive safe

Your Proposals my Decrys and your answers have been laid before the General and I believe his Excellency will comply with the mods of Liberation therein mentioned without any Material alteration

I am with Much respect
Your most obt & hum. Servt.
pr
S. Sherwood

Gentlemen
Ira Allen
Jos. Fay
Esqrs.

235:90

Charlston October 20th 1781

Dear Sir

Received yours of the 30th ultimo and Marked well the contents

You are no doubt impatient waiting a return from me but I must inform you that every matter has not operated as was expected yet in confidence and pursuant to my Engagements I transmit the heads of facts that you lay the same before the Gen. for his information (viz) a few days before the present session of Assembly there was news from various quarters that Admiral Degrafs had arrived at Chesapeak Bay with 28 Ships of the Line and 3,000 Land forces (exclusive of the Fleet Rhode Island which it is said are gone to Charleston to act in conjunction with Gen. Green) that Admiral Degrafs and the English fleet had a severe engagement in which the English were defeated & the accounts to me appear so exagerated that I shall not pretend to give you them But by the New York Papers it appears that the English were second best and that the French keep the Bay which prevents Lord Corn Wallace retreat Gen. Washington with a Division of his Allied army have gained the Marques (who commands in Virginia) and some report that Lord Cornwallace with his army are Prisoners these accounts whether true or fals have there effect on the People by the inclosed List of the officers of Government for the present Year and by the marks of the number of Men once You will see there has been a great Change which in many instances I find favourable But these matters are so delicate & so many strangers I have not sounded them

all. Yet it is to be observed that there is Spies watching our motion from the other States.

By the inclosed extract of the Proceedings of this Committee of both Houses you will see how we have dispenced with the Resolutions of Congress the proposals to settle with the neighbouring States we view in present circumstances a Polite mode of closing the Treaty with Congress and which will tend much to strengthen internal connections there was but two dissenting Votes in the whole

It is with regret I am necessitated to request that you do not send the proposed Proclamation at this time as the ~~Report~~ Before resited so there accounts seem to forbid it for the present yet the time will come when they will answer the Design intended

There is a account of Admiral Digby's arriving at Newyork and that he has only three Ships of the Line & Moreover expect more favourable news from the southwood soon — Movements in these Parts But to much depends on success to the south as this People do not feel themselves able to oppose the World which makes it feard and some dangerous Making the first Public move and to Publish these matters before they are fully ripe might at least endanger the whole system so well calculated for the Happiness of this People and on which I have placed my ambition You may depend that this People do not feel themselves under that obligation to Congress as they once did but are loosing sight of that object fast & Should the Gen. Patience hold out & the frontiers not be invaded to rouse that Spirit which there has been so much pains taken

to lay these matters may crown our most sanguine expectations — In full confidence of this I submitt the whole matter to those whose right it is to determin

I am Dear Sir

Your Affectionate

Ira Allen

Capt. Justice Sherwood

Com. Prisoners &c.

(Copy)

235:92

Charlestown Oct. 21st 1781

Dear Sir

Inclosed You will receive a Letter to Captain Justice Sherwood Commissary of Prisoners &c ——— You will forward the same to him by Flag as was agreed when I see you in Arlington I suppose that Mr. Blackley will be at your quarters before you receive this on his way to Canada with the Governors Permission with him you will forward said Letter as it is of consequence for our Prisoners I presume are all anpious to get Home ———

Your compliance

Will oblige the Public

and Yours to serve

I. Allen

Col. C. Walbridge

Skeensborough

23 Oct 1781

Not meaning Hostelities against Vermont while they chose to continue Neutrinically disposed to the King's troops as well as to evince the friendly inclenations of his Excellency's Gen. Haldimand towards them in the strongest manner I have the honour to send back a Scout of Your's surprised by one of mine——

As diffident of any Enemy is both prudent and natural and small Scouts of observation will consequently be used on both sides I shall continue this conduct while you think it your interest to do the same

I most sincerely lament that the necessity of service made shedding of blood unavoidable My scout of Observation was made purposely strong to avoid it. Your's I am willing to do justice—were to resolute to second my Wishes

While I Sympathize with the friends of the Deceased I have directed the last decencies to be paid to his corps——

A Flag attends your People to pass through all advanced Posts and see the Interment made and return

I have the honour to be
with due respect
Sir
Your Excellency's
most obedient
& most hum. Servt.
Barry St. Leger
Col. of Infantry com.g
His Majesty's Troops

Tyconderoga Oct. 23d. 1781

His Excellency's Governor Chittenden

235:94

By

Tyconderoga Oct. 23d 1781

Gentlemen

We are happy to inform your Excellency General Haldemand signified to us that the Remainder of the Prisoners including those of the Micronions shall be sent forward as soon as convenient and we earnestly intreat you to transmit to us on receipt of this Your opinions whether a Proclamation from His Excellency intimating his humane intentions towards Vermont and her Inions would at this time be acceptable or in any degree have a tendency to alleviate the calamities of War—

We cannot account for the delay of the Prisoners which Col. I. Allen and Maj. Fay promised to send and we had every reason to expect on or about the 17th instant

We have the Honor to be
Gentlemen
Your Most Humble & Obt. Servt.
J. Sherwood
Ged. Smith

To the Gov. and Council

235:95

Castleton 28th Oct. 1781

Dear Gov.

Recd. yours by express in which I did expect yours orders but it is better profable to expose me to the censor of the world than that favourrig^t police should not continue but it hase in consequence of the coresponcance Carried on with Canad made it much easer for it has brought my Enemies 140 miels nearer than otherwise they would have been however some may say that I am not acquainted with the police of this State I beg leave to say that Sham Prete has brought the whole force of Canada to fix in order to protect the new colony of Vermont the conversation of the officers to our men they sentt home and the open Letter they gave them which they were Directed to read. Causes much speculation among all ranks of people in Council with Col. Fletcher Col. Robeson Col. Clark and Mr. Gibert we are obliged to acquaint Maj.^r Skinner with the whole affair when he was told he said he knew the whole affair before many more I understand are no strangers to the matter—

I am Your Very Humble Servant

Roger Enos

State of Vermont

Arlington Nov. 14th 1781

Sir

The peculiar situation and circumstances with which this State for several Years last past has been attended induced me to address Your Excellency on a subject which nearly concerns her interest and may have its influance on the common cause of the states of America

Placing the highest confidence in Your Excellency's Patriotism in the cause of liberty and disposition to do equal rights and justice to every part of America (who have by arms supported their rights against the lawless power of Great Britain) I herein transmit the measures by which this State have conducted her policy for the security of its frontiers: and the design and end of it was set on foot, and has ever since been prosecuted on an honorable principle (as the consequences will fully evince) I do it with full confidence that your Excellency will not improve it to the disadvantage of this truly patriotic suffering State Although the substance has already been

* Communicated by Capt. Ezra Hancock employed by Maj' General Lyncoln by your Excellency's particular direction and who arrived here with the resolution of Congress of the seventh day of August last which appeared in some measure favourable to this State. & then disclosed to him the measures this State had adopted for her security which I make no doubt has by him been delivered your Excellency, And though I do not hesitate that you are well satisfied

of the real attachment of the Government of this State to the common cause I esteem it nevertheless my duty to this State and the common cause at large to lay before Your Excellency in writing the heretofore critical situation of this State and the management of its policy that it may opperate in your Excellency's mind as a barrier against clamorous aspersions of its numerous (and in many instances potent) adversions It is the misfortune of this State to joine on the province of Quebec and the waters of the lake Champlain which affords an easy passage for the enemy to make a descent with a formidable army on its frontiers and into the neighbourhood of the several States of New York New Hampshire and Massachusetts who have severally laid claims in part or in whole to this State and who have used every art which they could devise to devide her citizens to set Congress against her and finally to overturn the Government and share its teritory among them The requested applications of this State to the congress of the United States to be admitted into the federal union with them upon the liberal principles of paying a just proportion of the expences of the War with Great Britain have been rejected, and Resolutions passed exparte tending to create schisms in the State and thereby embarrass its efforts in raising men and money for the defence of her frontiers and discountenancing the very existance of the State Every article belonging to the United States even to pick-axes and spades has ben by the Continental Congress ordered out of this State at a time when she was erecting a line of forts on her frontiers at the same time the state of New York

evacuated the post of Skeensborough for the avowed purpose of
exposing this State to the ravages of the Common Enemy 235:9

The British officers in N.York being acquainted with the
public disputes between this and the claiming States and
between Congress and this State made overtures to Genrdl Allen
in a letter projecting that Vermont should be a colony under
the crown of England endeavouring at the same time to draw
the people of Vermont into there interest. The same day General
Allen rec'd this letter (which was in augustt 1780) he lade it
before me and my Council who under the critical Circumstances
of the State advised that no answer either oral or writen should
be returned and that Letter should be safely deposited till
further consideration to which General Allen consented
A few months after he rec'd a second letter from the Enemy, and
the same Council advised that General Allen should send
boath letters to Congress ~~including~~ (inclosed in a letter
under his signature) which he did in hopes that Congress
would admit Vermont into union but they had not the
desired effect. In the fall of the year 1780: the British made
an assent up the Lake Champlain and captured the Forts George
and Ann and appeared in force on the Lake. This occasioned the
Militia of this state to go forth to defend it. Thus the Militia
were encamped against the Enemy near six weeks when General
Allen received a flagg from them with an answer to my letter
dated the preceding July. to General Haldermand of the
subject of an exchange of prisoners. This flagg delivered a
Letter to General allen from the Commanding officer of the
Enemy who were then at Crown Point with proposals for

for a truce with the State of Vermont during the negotiation of the exchange of prisoners. General Allen sent back a flagg of his to the commanding officer of the British agreeing to the truce provided he would extend the same to the frontier posts of the State of New York which was complied with and a truce took place which lasted about three weeks. It was chiefly owing to the military prowess of the Militia of this State and the encluding the State of New York on the truce that albany and Schenectady had not fell a sacrifice to the ambition of the enemy that Campaign

Previous to the retireing of Enemy into winter quarters Colonel Allen and Major Fay were commissioned to negociate the proposed exchange of prisoners. They proceeded so far as to treat with the British Commissioners on the subject of their mission during which time they were interchangeably entertained with politics which they were treated in an affable manner as I have been told but no cartel was settled and the Campaign ended without the effusion of blood

The Cabinet council in the course of the succeeding winter finding that the Enemy in Canada were about 7000 strong and that Vermont must needs be their object the ensuing campaign circular letters were therefore sent from the supreme Executive authority of this State to the claiming States before mentioned demanding of them to relenquish their Claims to this State and inviting them to join

In a solid union and Confederation against the Common Enemy, Letters were sent to your Excellency and to the State of Connecticut and Rhode Island. Everyone of these letters the extreeme circumstances of this State and implored their aid and alliance, giving them withal to understand that it was out of the power of this State to lay in magazins and support a body of men sufficient to defend this State against the force of the Enemy. But to those letters there has been no maner of answer returned. From all which it appeared that this State was devoted to destruction by the sword of the Common Enemy. It appears to be the more rejustifiable that the State of Vermont should be thus forsook in asmuch as her citizens struck the first offensive blow against British usurpation by putting the Continent in possession of Ticondaroga and more then 200 pieces of cannon with Crownpoint St. Johns and all Lake Champlain: there operations in defending General Carlton in his attempts to raise the seige of St. John's their assisting in penetrating Canada: their vallor in the Battle of Hubbardtown and at the landing near Ticondaroga assisting in the capture of General Burgoyn and by being the principle barrier against the power of the Enemy in Canada ever since. That the citizens of this State have by nature an equal rights to liberty and independency with the citizens of America in general cannot be disputed: & that they have merited it from the United States by their opertions with them in bringing the presant glorious Revolution is as evident a truth as any other which respects the acquired rights of any Community. Generosity merit and gratitude all conspire in

vindicating the independance of Vermont: but notwithstanding the
agruments which have been exhibited in sundry pamphlets favour of
Vermont: ~~Ver~~ which have been abundantly satisfactory to the impartial part
of mankind it has been in the power of her eptternal enemies to deprive
her of Union Confederation, or any equal advantage in defending them-
selves against the Common enemy. The aomter being thus spent in
fruitless attempts to form alliance, and an advantages were procured
in favor of this State, except that Massachusetts withdrew her
Claims, on condition that the United States would concede to the
independance of Vermont: But that if they would not, they would
have there snack at the south end of its Terittory. Still New-
York and New-Hampshire were strenuously opposed to the
independance of Vermont and every stratagem in their power
to divide and subdivide her Citizens were exerted: imagining
that there influance in Congress, and the certain distruction
(as they supposed) of the inhabitants of this State by the
common enemy, could not fail of finally accomplishing their
wishes In this juncture of affairs the Cabinet of Vermont,
projected the eptention of their claims of jurisdiction upon
the States of New Hampshire and New York as well to quiet
their own internal divisions occasioned by the macinations of those
to Governments as to make them experience the eviles of intestine
broils, and strengthen this State against insult. The legislature
accordingly eptended there jurisdiction to the eastward of Connec-
-ticut River to the old Mason line, and to the westward to Hudson
river. ~~and~~ But in the articles of Union referd the determination of the
boundry line of Vermont and the respective claiming States to the
final decision of Congress, or by the contending Governments.

These were the principal political movements of the last winter The last Campaign opning with a gloomy aspect to the deserving Citizens of this State being destitute of adequate resorces and without any alliance and that from its local situation to Canada obliged to encounter the whole force of that province or give up its claim to indepindance and run away. Vermont being thues driven to desperation by the injustice of those who should have been her friends. was obliged to adopt policy in the room of power. And on the first day of may last Colonel Ira Allen was sent to Canada to further negociate the business of the exchange of prisoners who agreed on a time place and other particulars relating to the exchange. While he was transacting that busines. he was treated with great politeness. and entertained with potitical matters which necesity obliged him to humour in that easy manner that might serve the interest of this State in its extreme critical situation and that its consequences might not be injurious to the United States. The plan succeeded. The frontiers of this state were not invaded and Lorde Geored Germains letter wrought upon Congress and procured that from them while the public vertue of the people could not In the month of July last Major Joseph Fay was sent to the British shipping on Lak Champlain who compleated an exchange of a number of prisoners who were delivered at Skeensboro in september last at which time and place colonel allen and Major Fay had a Conference with the British Commissioners and no danger as yet had accured to or the United States from this quarter. And in the month of october last the enemy appeared in force at Crown Point and Ticondaroga but were manoevered ofit of there expectation and are returned into

Winter quarters in Canada. with great safety. that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet:

"I will put my Hook in their nose
"and turn them back by the way which they came,
"and they shall not come into this city (Isaiah 37 Vert)
"saith the Lord"

It remains that I congratulate your Excellency, and participate with you in the joy of your capturing the haughty Cornwallis, and his army; and assure your Excellency, that there no Gentlemen in America who enjoy the glorious victory more than the gentlemen of this State; and him who has the honour to subscribe himself

Your Excellency's devoted
and most Obedient
Humble Servant
Thos Cattenden

His Excellency
General Washington

Boston December 29th 1761

235:150

Sir

You will herewith receive a duplicate of your commission and instructions to attend the General Court of New Hampshire and have to add that notwithstanding one of your Colleagues the Hon^ble Gov^r being confined in Goal contrary to (as we consider) to the laws of the State and nations, yet we are so desirous of your accommodation, that we are ready to enter on the business of your mission

And are with sentiments of esteem your

Humble Servants

The Hon^ble Richard Bartlett Esq^r
President &c-

Thos Hutchinson
Jno Adams